



NIGHT.

When you have walked the weary way—
The weary way that leads by noon
And takes you to the end of day,
You know there waits for you a boon;
You know that on ahead is rest,
For roses drip with twilight dew
And all things seem but for the best
When Night holds out her arms to you.

When Night holds out her arms to you,
You know your cares have found release.

That what stern battling you must do
Is for the time bid pause by peace;
For down the slopes the shadows drift
And singing breezes falter through
The silence where the hills uplift—
And Night holds out her arms to you.

When Night holds out her arms, it seems
As though she brought each one a crown—

A crown of happiness and dreams,
She comes to countryside and town
With poppies in her dusky hands
And poppies in her garments, too;
All gracefully she comes and stands
And holds her soothing arms to you.

Just so when you are through with strife,
And, all world-weary on your way,
You reach the ending of this life—
For life is but a little day—
There will be naught to make you sad,
But all will be fair to your view,
You will be comforted and glad
When Night holds out her arms to you.
—Chicago Tribune.

A Real Daughter of the Revolution

By CAROLINE GEBHARDT.

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CHAPTER XIII.—CONTINUED.

Her guest looked at her somewhat suspiciously. Such graciousness from such a source was too unexpected to be received without reservation, yet he was not to be outdone in courtesy.

"Ah, madam," he said, as he bent to kiss her hand, "you little know what a pleasure it is to me to receive so kind a welcome at your hands. 'Tis doubly precious; first, because it comes from your sweet self and second, because it leads me to believe that you will extend the welcome to embrace me not only as your guest but as your nephew. Doubtless your niece, who I see by her horse without the gate is now with you, has already acquainted you with the happiness she has bestowed upon me in consenting to become my wife. I am here to claim the consummation of that promise. Advice from my general, Cornwallis, tell me that our army is to move and that my detachment may be sent into North Carolina. I fear, therefore, it may be many days, nay, months, before the fortunes of war permit me to return hither, and I cannot leave without knowing that your niece is under the protection of my name. My good chaplain is with-out, prepared to make us one, and I have but to crave the hospitality of your roof and the boon of your blessing for the completion of our happiness."

"You cannot mean," Mrs. Ellery cried, "that you expect to marry Jane here—now? My good man, you are out of your senses."

"Nay, my dear madam, never more in them, I assure you. Love is a great sharpener of wits."

"Maybe so, when it has any to work on," his hostess retorted with asperity, "but you will find yourself upon a fool's errand. Jane is in no mood for marrying, I tell you."

"We will allow Mistress Jane to decide that for herself. May I trouble you to call her?"

"Yes, right gladly will I call her and let her rebuke your insolence as it deserves." She stepped to the hall door. "Jane, child, come here. Col. Bessemer wishes to speak with you."

Jane was astonished that her aunt should summon her, but she presumed there must be some urgent cause—a message from her father and mother or her brother, for she had seen through the window that Edward was not with the officers; therefore she stepped from the room into the hall. Catching sight of her, Bessemer went swiftly forward and took her hand.

"I have come," he said, bending his head and speaking in a low tone, "to claim the promise you made me. My chaplain is without, prepared to marry us. Dispatches from my general, Cornwallis, as I have explained to your aunt, necessitate my immediate departure. I cannot leave without knowing that you are surely mine, bound to me by the sacred ties of matrimony."

Jane recoiled. "You cannot mean," she exclaimed, "that you have come to marry me now?"

"And why not? Was it not to be when I chose?"

"True; but surely you will give me more time. My father, my mother, even my brother, are not here. You would not have me marry without their presence? No; I am confident you have but said this to test my loyalty to my promise."

"And if I had," he sneered, "it would seem the test has proven a severe strain; that the tension has brought your promise to the breaking-point."

"You wrong me," she answered. "I am ready to keep my promise, but I had expected more charity in time."

"Yet, as I recollect it, there was no question of time in our compact save such time as should be of my choosing."

"That is so; and yet I am sure you will not take it ill if I beseech you to make your choice of a later date. You cannot consider it unreasonable that I should ask, a little time for preparation—a week, if you will; but if not, then a day. I am certain you will grant me this."

Her every protest but served to increase Bessemer's determination. "It may be that my memory plays me false," he remarked, "yet it occurs to me that the other night you promised to marry me at any moment which might seem to me most expedient. This is the moment; but if such were not your promise, then, of course—"

"Such was my promise, but—"

"But now that the object for which that promise was given is attained, I may whistle for the payment of my claim? Is that your stand? Well, while I should have looked for fairer treatment at the hands of a daughter of the Ellerys and the sister of your brother, still—"

"Say no more," Jane interrupted proudly. "I shall beseech no further favors. I am prepared to do your bidding."

"Ah, madam," he observed, "it is your better self which speaks." He turned toward the porch upon which Mrs. Ellery had remained impatient. "My dear aunt to be," he said, "I am a candidate for your congratulations. Your beloved niece has promised to marry me at once."

"Jane, what folly is this?" her aunt cried. "It cannot be that you have submitted to this man's importunities? Fie, I am ashamed of you! You are no niece of mine."

"Dear aunt," Jane answered wearily, "it is the keeping of a promise. You would not have me break it?"

"Tush!" the other woman exclaimed; "there are worse things than broken promises. I have seen the Ellerys make fools of themselves many a time to keep their word, and regret it bitterly afterwards. Thank God, I have no silly Ellery traditions back of me. I am a Morgan, and a Morgan is not afraid to break a promise if by so doing greater crimes can be prevented; and what greater crime could there be, Jane, than the perjury of swearing to love and honor this man when you know that you do neither? Think you," she continued, "that I will permit my house to be the scene of such a farce? Never! You must find some other spot."

Bessemer turned with lifted brows to Jane. "If," she said, in answer to his look, "my aunt will not permit us to be married under her roof, she will not, I am sure, drive us from her garden."

She descended the steps as she spoke, glad to get into the open, for even the well-ventilated hall was choking her. Her pride forbade her to make another protest against the keeping of her promise, and she was anxious to have the ordeal over.

Bessemer summoned the chaplain and the higher officers, and with a brief but adroit explanation requested the reverend gentleman to perform the ceremony. That holy man began a hasty search for his book, not being prepared for so startling a demand. Bessemer's brows contracted as the search lengthened.

While they all stood thus, they were startled by shouts coming from the hill where the Ellery mansion had once stood. The shouts were followed by some scattering shots which fell far short, as they were meant to do of the waiting group. Upon the hill could be seen a gathering of many horsemen.

Officers and men turned eager eyes upon Bessemer. Would he respond to this challenge sent him from that distant point, or would he proceed with his marriage? But Bessemer had been soldier before he was lover, and to do aught but respond was his nature. With a hasty word to Jane, a ringing command to his men, he leaped into his saddle and dashed towards the eminence. The horsemen whirled about. Their mission was accomplished—to draw him from the Ellery place. Neatly dodging Edward with his pursuing force, they had galloped towards the Ellery plantation, only to find Bessemer there before them. Worthington, remembering Bessemer's hand in burning Mrs. Ellery's other home and too far off to recognize Jane, had not known but that Bessemer's present mission was a marauding one. To draw Bessemer's attention from the unprotected mistress of the house to themselves was the quick scheme of his companions and himself.

Then came a long chase and a hot one. Bessemer's force was nearly quadruple his opponents', and could he have cornered them it would have meant their extermination; but with their virile steeds, their knowledge of every hollow and ravine, every rock and crevice, he had only the excitement of the race for his pains; yet it was not in him to give up so long as his wily foes let him keep them in sight, and night overtook him ere he abandoned the pursuit.

Returning disgruntled to the highway, he met a messenger from Cornwallis with an imperative summons to join the main army at once. However great the temptation might have been to tarry long enough to consummate his interrupted marriage with Jane, he was yet too great a stickler for discipline to do otherwise than obey instantly the commands of his chief.

CHAPTER XIV.
HE DID A-WOOLING GO.

It was a cold evening after the Americans had so cleverly given the British the slip that Capt. Worthington set forth from his father's house. The captain's continental uniform had been laid aside, and he was attired in the most approved riding costume for gentlemen of that day.

His high-top boots so shone that you could have used them for mirrors with the greatest ease; his knee-breeches were of finest broadcloth; the frills of his shirt were beautifully pinked, while the playful evening breeze toyed with his open coat just enough to display its rich crimson lining. Those who had seen him two days before would scarce have thought he could turn out such a top.

When he reached the Ellery place and dismounted to open the great gates which led to the avenue the sun was just sinking behind the strip of woodland to the west, while such of the west windows of the mansion as were closed blushed brilliant red under the ardor of its good-night kiss.

The low branches of the handsome elms bent towards him with murmurous greeting; a toad hopped from out the bordering grass and looked up at him with beady, friendly eyes; a dog came from around the house and ran towards him with joyously wagging tail and gay bark. All bespoke a gracious welcome. When he reached the front door there was no need to lift the heavy knocker, for Gabriel had caught sight of him from somewhere within and hastened to meet him, while Absalom came to take his horse, a great concession, Godfrey knew.

"Yes, sah, Massa Godfrey. Missy Jane am home, sah," Gabriel declared, too sure of the fact to wait to ask his young mistress about it.

Godfrey, anticipating a better opportunity for private converse with Jane outside, declined the invitation to enter the house and settled himself upon one of the seats which ran along the side of the portico. Lightning-bugs were flashing among

the trees of the avenue; a katydid set up a plaint in the wistaria vine beside him; in the dark depths of the woods an owl was hooting. The silence of night was falling, and with it had come the night-sounds.

Gabriel hurried up to Jane's room to announce Godfrey's arrival, and not finding her there hastened to the utmost confidence to Mr. Ellery's sitting room, for at this time in the evening Jane and her stepmother were likely to be with the invalid.

Gabriel did not know, as the older servants of the David Ellery household knew, that young Worthington was not in favor with Mrs. Ellery.

Jane, who had been reading to her father, let fall the book into her lap at his announcement of Worthington's arrival while Mrs. Ellery dropped her embroidery. An instant's uneasy silence pervaded the apartment.

"The insolence!" said Mrs. Ellery at last. "How dare he come here in this high-handed manner? And how has he escaped the British? When last we knew of him, he was their captive, only saved by Col. Bessemer's great clemency from being a corpse. No doubt he is now a fugitive, fleeing from them, and relies upon you, Jane, to aid his escape or to hide him here. Was there ever such audacity? Gabriel, tell the man to be gone; that under no consideration will Miss Jane see him."

Up rose Jane, and laid her book upon the near-by table with an emphatic slap. "You must permit me," she said, looking coldly at her stepmother and for once blind to the nervous frown which had gathered upon her father's brow and to the wistful look which ever came into his eyes at sign of disagreement between her and his wife, "you must permit me to deal with my visitors as I see fit. Gabriel, you may go."

She swept from the room, out into the hall, and half-way down the stairs; and then she stopped—stopped to collect her thoughts; to still the flutter of her heart; to plan her mode of procedure.

Godfrey, sitting upon the portico, gazing into the peaceful night, was thinking of the beauty of the surroundings; of the luxuriousness of Jane's home. It required no little courage, no small amount of self-confidence, to ask her to leave it for him; and that she could think enough of him to do it—ah, that was the wonderful thing.

Yet, if all went well, when this war was over, when American success was assured, as he never doubted it would be, he could offer her a home scarcely less beautiful, for he would accept his grandfather's offer to manage for him his estates in Virginia. Settled in the great white house under the Virginia oaks and walnuts, Jane would miss but little of the luxury of her present abode.

There was a flutter of white upon the staircase, a soft step across the hall. Godfrey sprang to his feet. "Jane!" he cried, holding out both

hands; but the one hand Jane gave him was cold—cold despite the fragrant warmth of the night.

"Ah, Jane," cried Worthington, the heat of his own emotions making him impervious for the nonce to the chill of her demeanor, "how I have longed for this moment, for this opportunity to see you, since that blessed night when you saved my life; and did far more than save it—made it worth the living by telling me that you loved me. It seems incredible that but four days have passed since then. They seem rather like four months, so lagging has been each moment until I could again be with you."

With an effort Jane freed her hand from his strong clasp and moved away from him to the edge of the portico.

"Capt. Worthington," she said, without looking at him, "I pray that you will forget that night and all that occurred then. Let us cancel it from our memory."

"Cancel it?" he gasped. "Cancel it? Jane, what do you mean? Is this some joke, some witticism, that I am too dull to see the humor of?"

"Nay," she answered, half turning towards him and speaking in a voice whose sweetness was lost in over-earnestness, "when I tell you that I am betrothed to Col. Bessemer you will possibly—understand."

"Betrothed to Col. Bessemer? And since when?" He came closer. "Since when? Were you, perhaps, betrothed to him that night when you risked your life to save mine; when what made that life worth the saving was the belief that you glorified it by your love? Tell me, Jane, were you betrothed to Col. Bessemer then?" He laid his hand upon her arm.

She shrank back. "No—since."

"Since? And with the memory of that night before you? No, I will not believe it. You are playing with me; but seeking to test my love—my faith in you. Know, then, that there is no test you can bring to bear which it will not stand. I believe in you, in your faithfulness, as I believe in God."

The girl threw out her hand in a gesture of despair. How hard, how bitterly hard, he was making it.

He came still closer. "Speak to me, beloved," he said. "Tell me why you thought it necessary to put me to this test?"

She clasped her hands in front of her. Temptation was pressing her close; pressing her to throw herself into his arms; to tell him all; to acquaint him with that wretched bargain she had made; but if she should yield—if she should tell him? What then? It would mean the forfeit of his life or Bessemer's. She knew that he would never rest until one life or the other had paid the penalty.

No, no; honor, duty, everything demanded that she herself, no other, should pay the price. It was she who had done the bargaining; she had bought with her eyes open; and was the price too great to pay for that which she had bought? With the living man beside her, could she regret her purchase? If she had it to do over, would she not again do what she had done? Just to know that he was in the world, was that not enough to pay any price for?

She turned to the figure beside her. "In stress of excitement, Capt. Worthington," she said, "we oft do that which our cooler judgment does not approve. You and I have been friends from childhood. I have long looked upon you as a brother. Your life is nearly as precious to me as my own brother's. That night, when I had devised a way to save it and you were so laggard in availing yourself of the opportunity—"

"You!" He bent his dark head towards her.

A soft-footed, dusky figure had a minute before lighted the tree of candles which stood upon the carved cabinet within the hall. The light shone through the broad entrance and spread across the portico, but Jane resolutely kept her face turned towards the twilight, which was deepening into night, and the brilliant glow at her back served rather to throw her features into shadow than to betray their emotions.

"And you—what, Jane?" Godfrey prodded gently.

She clasped and unclasped her hands nervously. The task she had set herself was a lacerating one, but she went on with it bravely, if falteringly. "And it may be that I—in my anxiety that my old-time friend, that Mary's brother, should not recklessly throw the chance of saving his life away; it may be that in the flurry of the moment, I—led you to believe—my feelings—she stopped, and then she gathered her determination and continued—"were of a different character—"

"Jane!" The cry was that of a wounded animal.

There was a heavy silence, weighed upon her side with rising fear, with the strangling of loving impulses; upon his, with a gathering torrent of anger that was sweeping away the daze the blow had caused him. When next he spoke his voice was harsh.

"And so," he said at last, "Miss Ellery had resorted that night to her well-known talent for acting—one of her many gifts—to deceive me into the belief that the life she offered was really of value. Now that I am acquainted with its true worth, you may be sure I shall guard it well."

He strode down the steps, across the gravel, into the gloomy interior of the avenue. He had forgotten that his horse was in the Ellery stables. Out through the wide gates he went, into the dusty road, over the miles that lay between his home and Jane's; and Jane still leaned, a white and broken figure, against the pillar of the portico.

[To Be Continued.]

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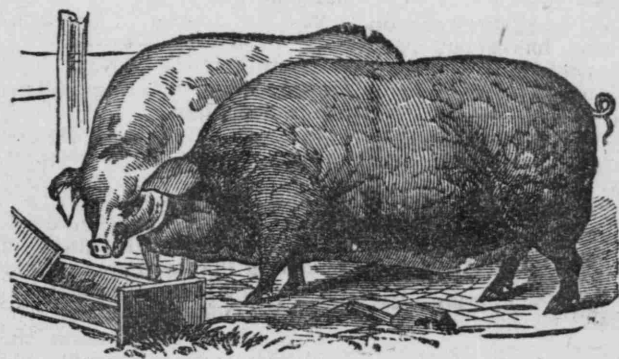
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